

covery or improvement, in an age so abounding in wonderful changes, by which the student could be relieved of the toil and labor now deemed indispensable for his discipline, and by which, youth could be at once invested with the wisdom and learning, thus far attainable only by long years of industrious application. Insomuch as might depend on the suffrages of Collegiates, such an improvement would certainly entitle its author to a place in the most delightful region of those Elysian fields, which VIRGIL has consecrated to Heroes and Sages and the inventors of other useful arts. But however sincere would be the pleasure enjoyed, as well as imparted, by the bearer of such tidings, I am charged, my young friends, with no such mission. It was the consolation of the scholar, under the afflictions of neglect, persecution and poverty, in the monarchies of the old world, that "there was no royal road to learning." Whatever other advantages we have gained under our freer institutions, we have found it equally true, that there is no popular road. The acquisitions of liberal scholarship are neither elective or hereditary, but the results only of the patient toils of genius. Neither place, nor power, nor wealth, can bestow them—no canons of succession transmit them. They are the purchase only of the ingenuous mind. Yielding, therefore, to that necessity which is our common lot, let us not lament nor despond; but rather rejoice, that they are prizes held out for the free competition of all, and endeavor to alleviate our labors, and illumine our path, in their pursuit, by a cursory review of the objects of a liberal education. The subject has no claim to novelty, but it may not be unprofitable, occasionally to examine the grounds of our opinion and practice, though they challenge general approbation.

The objects of a Liberal Education! Why the endowment of Colleges, and establishment of Professorships, and the tedious and laborious course of studies required for graduation?

When Omar, the Mahometan Caliph of Egypt, was entreated not to consign to the flames the magnificent Library at Alexandria, the repository of the productions of the human mind for forty-six centuries of the world's history, he replied: "If there be that, contained in these books, which accords with the Koran, the latter is all sufficient without them; but if there be any thing repugnant to that sacred book, we can have no need of them. Order them, therefore, all to be destroyed." The historian informs us, that they were accordingly made to supply fuel for the luxurious baths of that Capitol, for more than six months, until